

THE ANNUAL REPORT

Of the ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS of *Ireland*, to the Lord Lieutenant,
dated 14 August 1837.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY CONSTANTINE HENRY, EARL OF MULGRAVE,
LORD LIEUTENANT-GENERAL,
AND GENERAL GOVERNOR OF IRELAND.

WE, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for Ireland, whose hands and corporate seal are hereunto annexed, beg leave, in pursuance of the Act 3 & 4 Will. IV., c. 37, to report to your Excellency, that the proceedings of the Commissioners for the year last past have been in a great measure similar to those specified in our preceding Reports.

In relation to the repairs of Churches, the Commissioners, feeling the extreme importance of obtaining the co-operation and superintendence of the respective incumbents or officiating ministers of the several parishes in their execution, required that a specification of the repairs, recommended by the architects of the Board as requisite, should be submitted for the supervision and approval of the clergyman in the first instance. By this means obvious advantages were attained, and all repairs which admitted, in the judgment of the architect, of being postponed to an ulterior period, without detriment to the fabrics, were avoided; whilst those which related to the exterior, and the security of the buildings against the effects of the weather, were carefully pointed out, and put in course of repair.

Many instances occurred of difference of opinion, in which, on a personal conference, the incumbents were satisfied with the propriety of the architect's recommendation, and thus an opportunity was afforded of an entire agreement between the parties, as to the propriety of the repairs recommended, previously to any steps being taken to offer the works to public competition; and further, the Commissioners required each clergyman to certify his approval of the manner in which the works in his Church had been executed, and how far the same were in accordance with the specification, previously to a final payment being made to the contractors; and thereby superadded the testimony of a disinterested and, in general, vigilant superintendent, to the certificate of the architect, that all had been duly completed according to the tenor of the contract, and in good and workmanlike manner.

Another great object of the system adopted, not only in this, but in other departments, has been to invite the aid and assistance of the several Archbishops and Bishops; and with this view Schedules were furnished, in the early part of the year, to each Diocesan of the Churches which had been repaired in his Diocese, and of the grants voted for Church works in the current year, and of such of those voted in the past year as had not then been acted on; and their Lordships were requested to make any observations or suggestions for the consideration of the Commissioners which they might think necessary in regard, as well to the mode in which repairs had been executed, as to the nature of those which were in progress or in contemplation. The Commissioners also communicated to the Archbishops and Bishops, that if they would intimate the period at which it was their intention to hold their annual visitations, directions would be given, if desired, that the respective architects should be in attendance to answer any inquiries which their Lordships or the Clergy might think proper to make respecting the Church works which had been executed, or those which were proposed to be executed, or respecting works which, although requisite, might not have been provided for in the schedules previously furnished.

In some cases this offer was acceded to, and the Commissioners conceive with much advantage; and, in other instances, their Lordships have either furnished extracts of the notes taken by them at their visitations as regarded the state of the Churches, or have directed their Rural Deans to furnish reports on the subject; and, from a more general adoption of a system by which such reports might, from time to time, be furnished, of the wants of the respective Churches, in the way of repairs, the Commissioners would anticipate considerable benefit and economy to the fund under their administration.

In some few cases the lauded proprietors have interested themselves in the repairs going on in Churches, and have been in communication with the Commissioners on the subject, and, as any suggestions or superintendence from such sources cannot fail of being extremely valuable, whether as an additional check upon unnecessary expenditure, or as an efficient control over the conduct of the contractors and workmen, the Commissioners have, by a prompt and immediate attention to the several matters by these means brought under their consideration, sought to encourage their continuance and increase.

The sum appropriated to the repairs of Churches in the present year amounts to 45,566 *l.*; and this, together with 103,041 *l.* 5 *s.* 8 *d.*, the residue of the monies appropriated to the like purpose in the former years, and which remained unexpended on the 1st of August 1836, has been, and is now, in course of expenditure. Many circumstances combine, more or less, to retard the application of the monies voted for repairs, such as the examination of buildings so much detached, and furnishing detailed estimates of the works required; the selection of such as are indispensable from those that may with propriety be postponed; the approval, by the clergymen, of the specifications of the repairs proposed; differences of opinion as to the necessity or propriety of works between the architects and the incumbent or some resident proprietor, and the correspondence consequent thereon; the inviting proposals from competent builders by means of public advertisements, all contribute to prevent so immediate an application of the monies as could otherwise be wished; but to the present time, the Commissioners have to state that of the monies appropriated to church works the sum of 63,829 *l.* 15 *s.* 3 *d.* has been expended to the first instant, and that every exertion is being made for the due application of the residue.

In addition to the sums already mentioned, it became necessary to appropriate a further sum, within the year, to the amount of 10,000 *l.*, by reason of many of the buildings having been found, when the works were commenced, in a worse state than was anticipated, or could have been foreseen, occasioned by neglect of long standing; but, in consequence of the complete state of repair in which such Churches are now being put, it is expected that no further expenditure will be required on these Churches for a considerable time; and with a view to prevent trifling damages from becoming serious by delay, the Commissioners have resolved to allow incumbents to expend such sums as may be necessary, not in any instance exceeding 5 *l.*, in immediate repairs, arising from casualty or unforeseen accident. In such cases, however, the incumbents are required to report immediately the injury sustained, and to furnish the tradesmen's accounts with the least possible delay, in order that the same may be examined and discharged.

The Commissioners feel gratified, in reporting to your Excellency, that by means of savings effected in contracts, in addition to the disappropriation of part of the monies voted by the late Trustees and Commissioners of First Fruits, which could not be rendered available for the purposes contemplated, a fund has been provided, with which, aided and assisted by subscriptions and contributions of the parishioners, several Churches have been ordered to be rebuilt. In selecting the parishes for such rebuildings, the Commissioners have had for their guidance as well the recommendations of the Archbishops and Bishops as the applications received from the parishioners; and they deemed the amount of the contributions tendered no small evidence of the anxiety and wants of the parishioners, and have acceded more readily to those applications, when the amount, though small, was contributed by a number of persons, than where a liberal offer was made by an individual, who perhaps might be influenced in his donation by a desire to have the Church built on a particular site, or after a certain manner, which might require a sum to be expended on the ornamental part of one building to the sacrifice of accommodation in other cases; the Commissioners conceiving that, in all cases, ornament should give place to accommodation, and preferring, in the present limited state of their funds, to provide parishioners with the shell of a Church until they shall be enabled to complete it, rather than to leave them without any. Proceeding on this principle, they have by means of the funds obtained as aforesaid, provided for the rebuilding of 30 Churches, as follow: ten in the North of Ireland, eleven in the South, six in the East, and three in the West, exclusive however of 40 Churches, which have been built under the superintendence of the Commissioners, out of funds appropriated

appropriated by the late Trustees and Commissioners of First Fruits for the purpose.

As the repairs which the Churches hitherto stood in need of, were greater than of an ordinary nature, and such as the Commissioners could not, with propriety, undertake without the interposition of professional skill, the yearly estimates furnished by incumbents of parishes have been in these respects of less practical utility hitherto than it is expected they will be in future.

The items and sums required by these estimates for the performance of Divine Service in the several Churches and Chapels, show an increase to the amount of 985*l.* 10*s.* 5*d.*, as compared with the preceding year, the sum demanded for that purpose, for the year ending August 1836, being 30,172*l.* 18*s.* 2*d.*, while for the year last past, they have amounted to 31,159*l.* 8*s.* 7*d.*

Many circumstances, and those too of a gratifying nature, have combined to produce such increase; for example, the celebration of Divine Service on Sunday evenings in parishes where heretofore there had been only service in the mornings, by which an increased expenditure has been incurred, at the solicitation of the parishioners, in supplying lights and providing the Churches with lamps for the purpose; also, an allowance of small salaries to clerks, and for requisites in places frequented by the Diocesans for celebration of Divine worship, in benefices where there is not as yet any Church, or one not generally convenient for the parishioners; also, an increase in the article of fuel, as it appeared that damp was very destructive to the Churches, and that nothing tended more to their preservation than a proper and judicious mode of airing them; and with this view, wherever the parishioners were willing to contribute the expense of a stove, the Commissioners have incurred the expense of setting it up, and in many cases, where the contributions fell short of the required amount, or where the Church has been lately repaired, and the parishioners were too poor to contribute, the deficiency has been supplied; and, in connexion with this subject, some further expense has been incurred by allowing, in some instances, where the sextons were inadequately remunerated, a small addition to their salaries for the increased duties required of them in airing the Churches; and no salary is now paid to those persons, except upon proof that the regulations in this respect have been fully attended to.

In reporting the expenditure of so large a sum in the repairs of Churches, the Commissioners feel it right to call your Excellency's attention to the causes which rendered such an outlay necessary: they may be shortly stated to be the disinclination of the parishioners to assess themselves with large sums for Church purposes for some years prior to the passing of the Church Temporalities Act, and the impossibility of collecting such sums as were assessed; by reason whereof the Churches became in almost every instance out of repair, and in not a few verged towards total ruin. As soon, however, as the Commissioners have effected a thorough repair of the entire, it will be their duty to adopt every possible precaution against further demands on this head, and they meditate requesting the aid of the assembled Parishioners, as well as that of the Incumbents and the Bishops, to assist them in limiting and controlling expenditure.

The Commissioners have been in expectation of being able to report to your Excellency that the inappropriate tithes of the parish of Cahir, bequeathed for the repairs of Churches in the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore, had been made available; but the legal proceedings, consequent upon the claim set up to them by the Earl of Clengal, have not yet been brought to a termination, although a verdict has been obtained against his Lordship. Some time must therefore elapse before the fund can be made effective for the purposes for which it was bequeathed.

From the returns made by the respective Archbishops and Bishops, for the half years ending on the 1st of November 1836, and of May 1837, it appears that 77 promotions have been made to ecclesiastical benefices, of which 13 only appear liable to tax. The revenue arising from this source of income in general, as well as that from the annual instalments in repayment of the loans advanced by the late Trustees and Commissioners of First Fruits, for building glebe-houses, has been as yet comparatively unproductive, this arising, in both instances, from the difficulty experienced by the clergy in the collection of tithe composition; but as some of the clergy are reported to have been more successful in collecting their incomes than others, the Commissioners have renewed their applications

applications for payment of these instalments, and of the tax: and when indulgence is claimed, the parties liable have been required to return the amounts of tithe compositions received or in arrear to the 1st November 1836, in order that payment may be insisted upon, on account of both, in proportion to the amounts of income received by the clergy.

Under and by virtue of the provisions of the Acts of Parliament, which enable the Commissioners to suspend the appointment of clerks to benefices in which Divine Service had not been celebrated within the three years ending February 1833, and also to recommend to your Excellency and the Privy Council the suspension of the appointment of clerks to ecclesiastical dignities and offices, the persons holding which had not actual cure of souls within the parishes thereto appropriated, and to rectories the rectors whereof have not had actual cure of souls therein, the Commissioners have to report, that the appointments have been suspended by them of clerks to the following benefices, namely, the vicarage of Ballysheehan, in the diocese of Cashel, of the reputed value of 150*l.* per annum; the vicarage of Templequinlan, in the diocese of Ross, of the reputed value of 115*l.* 0*s.* 10*d.*; and the vicarage of Ballylarkin, in the diocese of Ossory, of the reputed value of 30*l.* 15*s.* 4*d.* per annum, the incomes of which benefices arise solely from tithe compositions. In regard to Ballysheehan, one of the benefices so suspended, and the contiguous benefice of Erry, the appointment of a clerk to which had been previously suspended, the cure of souls of these parishes has been by the Diocesan committed to a curate, who is resident, and celebrates Divine Service in a house licensed for the purpose, and after appropriating 90*l.* for the curate's stipend, and providing a residence, the residue of the income arising from these benefices has been set apart for the purpose of erecting a Church, in a central position for both parishes; and in the case of the two remaining benefices, the Commissioners have, with the concurrence of the respective Dioceses, allotted stipends to the incumbents or officiating ministers of adjoining parishes, appointed by the Bishops for the discharge of the spiritual duties thereof. Under those provisions which relate to ecclesiastical dignities, offices, and rectories as aforesaid, the Commissioners have further to report, that acting upon information furnished to them, they have recommended to your Excellency and Council to suspend the appointment of clerks to the following dignities and benefices; that is to say, the deanery of the cathedral of Down, of the reputed annual value of 1,491*l.* 19*s.*; to the precentorship of the cathedral church of the Holy Trinity, Dublin, of the reputed annual value of 484*l.* 19*s.* 6½*d.*; to the treasurer'ship of the cathedral church of St. Patrick's, Dublin, of the reputed value of 330*l.* 1*s.* 5½*d.* per annum; to the chancellor'ship of the cathedral church of Ross, of the reputed value of 117*l.* 1*s.* 6½*d.*, arising from rents of land, exclusive of renewal fines; to the sacrist'ship of Clonfert, of the reputed value of 22*l.* per annum; and to the rectory of Ballymackey, of the reputed value of 283*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* per annum, which rectory was reported to have been theretofore episcopally united to the chancellor'ship of the cathedral church of Killaloe; and your Excellency and the Council have been pleased to order and direct these appointments to be suspended accordingly, with the exception of the deanery of the cathedral church of Down, respecting which the pleasure of your Excellency and the Council has not as yet been communicated to the Commissioners.

The Commissioners also received within the last year notices of vacancies in the treasurer'ship of Connor, and in the Archdeaconry of Ardfert, which vacancies they directed should be notified to your Excellency and the Council, but unaccompanied with any recommendation on the subject, as it appeared that there was cure of souls in one or more of the parishes appropriated to each of these dignities. It seemed proper, however, to your Excellency and the Council, to disappropriate a portion of the Rectory of Ardfert, from and out of the Archdeaconry, and to annex the portion so disappropriated to the perpetual cure erected within that parish; and the Commissioners have been furnished with a copy of the Orders in Council to that effect, as also of another order for disappropriating from and out of the revenues of the Bishopric of Killaloe and Kilmora, and vesting in this Board, certain Rectories and Tithes, part and parcel of the revenues thereof, which had been demised for a term of years; and as the Commissioners are by law restrained from renewing leases of property of this description, the revenue arising from this source will be considerably increased on the expiration of the tenant's interest therein.

The charges upon the See-houses of Waterford, Raphoe, Ferns and Cloyne, for improvements made thereon, and payable to the representatives of the late Diocesans, have entailed on the Commissioners an expense within the year to the amount of 3,461*l.* 18*s.* 9*d.*, but as the charges on the See-houses of Raphoe and Ferns have been entirely liquidated, there now only remains to be paid 314*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.* on account of the charges on the See-houses of Waterford and Cloyne.

In consequence of the late Dr. Butson succeeding to the temporalities of the Bishoprics of Killaloe and Kilmora, the See-house of Clonfert became vested in the Commissioners, and dilapidations having been incurred therein, were ascertained under a commission to amount to 719*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.*, as to the payment of which the Commissioners are in correspondence with the Bishop's representatives, subject, however, to any charges they may have against the Commissioners on account of monies certified to have been expended on any buildings or improvements.

In regard to the See-houses of Cashel, Raphoe, and Ferns, with the mensal and demesne lands belonging to each, which have not been as yet permanently disposed of, an expense to the amount of 554*l.* 12*s.* 5*d.* has been incurred within the year in insuring and upholding them in good and habitable order, ready for the occupation of a suitable tenant, when such may offer, and in the employment of persons for the care of the mansion-houses, plantations, and ornamental grounds. With reference to these mansion-houses and demesnes, and the out-offices and buildings in connexion therewith, the Commissioners cannot help adverting to the difficulty presented to a permanent and eligible disposition of them by their extent and magnitude, these having been occupied by the successive Diocesans, who have expended several thousands of pounds on them; yet, in reference to their future letting and demise, it is apprehended that many persons may have been deterred from incurring the expense consequent on upholding them. A proposal has been received, however, for the mansion-house and demesne of Ferns, which the Commissioners conceived eligible, under the circumstances, and which they have accordingly submitted for your Excellency's approbation.

Under the provisions of the 6 & 7 William IV., c. 99, the Commissioners have become chargeable with an annual payment of 1,500*l.* to the present Bishop of Cork and Ross, that being declared to be the sum whereby the revenues of the Bishopric of Cloyne fell short of those of Cork and Ross, which became vested in the Commissioners on the demise of the late Bishop of Cloyne.

The consideration and examination of the claims for arrears of Vestry-cess for the years 1831, 1832, and 1833, have continued to engage the attention of the Commissioners, and claims to the amount of 634*l.* 6*s.* 2*d.* have been admitted and discharged within the year; thereby making the total sum paid to this date amount to 48,023*l.* 18*s.* 4*d.* on this account.

The revenues of the six sees, now vested in the Commissioners, have not been hitherto so productive as might have been expected. The tenants under these sees are 381 in number; of whom, 73 have purchased perpetuities, 120 have obtained renewals of their leases on payment of fines, but 180 have not renewed, thereby causing a temporary diminution of income.

Under the head of "Perpetuity Purchases" the Commissioners have to report, that they have received within the year 102 applications, and purchases have been completed to the amount of 61,487*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.*; several cases are still pending in the office, the terms in many of which have been declared and reported to your Excellency and the Council for approval, most of which, it is expected, will be completed.

Since the passing of the Act empowering sub-tenants to purchase perpetuities, 35 notices have been received; but in 13 of these cases the superior tenants have applied, within the time by law prescribed, and contracted for the purchase; in eight other cases the time for so doing has not expired, and consequently the Commissioners cannot proceed in the matter; and as regards the remainder, in which the time has expired and the immediate tenants have not applied, the calculations have been undertaken; but very considerable difficulties have presented themselves as to the principles to be observed in computing and ascertaining the contributions of the several parties interested, and some unavoidable delay has consequently occurred in carrying into effect the provisions

sions of the Act; but every exertion is being made to enable the treaties with the sub-tenants to be proceeded with.

In reference to the monies received on account of the Perpetuity Purchase Fund, the Commissioners have to report, that they have invested a sum of 40,113*l.* 1*s.* 1*d.* within the year, in the purchase of 44,950*l.* Government three per cent. consols, in addition to the sums already reported; which investments are, however, subject to the engagements that have been entered into for the repairs of churches.

Under the 6 & 7 Will. IV., c. 99, the estate of the Vicars-Choral of the cathedral church of Cashel became vested in the Commissioners, subject to the uses of the present members of the corporation, in the same proportions as heretofore enjoyed by them. In regard to such like corporations in other cathedral churches, the Commissioners instituted inquiries as to the several duties performed by the respective members thereof previously to any recommendation being made to your Excellency in Council touching the properties of these corporations; and upon mature and deliberate consideration of the information furnished respecting the Minor Canonry of the cathedral church of Ardfer, and the Vicars-Choral of the cathedral churches of Lismore, Cork, Cloyne, Ross and Tuam, the Commissioners have recommended to your Excellency in Council to order and direct, that the estates and other emoluments of these corporations should be vested in them, in order that same may be applied to the use of the present members, and to such and so many of their successors as may be required for the effectual discharge of the duties appertaining thereto.

And to the Report herewith submitted is annexed an account of the receipts and disbursements of the Commissioners to the 1st instant, specifying the sources from whence arising, and the specific purposes to which the receipts have been applied.

All which is humbly submitted to your Excellency's consideration.

(SEAL.)

CHARLES KILDARE.
FRANC. SADLEIR.
JOHN C. ERCK.
WM. QUIN.

Board Room, Kildare-street, Dublin,
14 August 1837.

Entered on the Minutes,
J. Wilson, Secretary.

BY THE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS FOR IRELAND.

AN ACCOUNT of all their RECEIPTS and DISBURSEMENTS for One Year, ending the 1st day of August 1837, distinguishing the specific sources from which all Monies have been derived; and showing the Total Amount derived from each source, and the specific purposes to which the Receipts have been applied.

RECEIPTS:		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Balance 1st August 1836.—General Fund	- - -	2,805	3	8			
Perpetuity Purchase Fund	- - -	75,407	14	3½			
From See estates, of Waterford and Lismore	- - -	5,613	10	1	78,219	17	11½
Killalla and Achery	- - -	5,294	10	4			
Clonsfert and Kilmacdagh	- - -	1,690	14	1			
Raphoe	- - -	5,038	2	8			
Onorey	- - -	3,463	-	-			
Cork and Ross	- - -	5,257	16	5			
From charge on the See of Derry, under the 54th sec., 3 & 4 Will. 4, cap. 37	- - -	-	-	-	97,467	13	7
From Perpetuity Purchase Fund	- - -	61,487	4	9	5,160	-	-
Interest on 110,400 <i>l.</i> 3 per cent. consols	- - -	-	-	-			
Invested	- - -	3,310	-	-			
Interest on mortgages granted	- - -	414	18	1			
Printed forms sold relative thereto	- - -	19	10	-			
					65,233	6	10

Receipts—continued.			£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
From glebe-house loan instalments	-	-	-	-	-	1,033	14	7
From church loan instalments, levied previous to passing the Church Temporalities Act, arrears of	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	2
From First Fruits and Fees, arrears received	-	-	-	-	-	31	12	10
From interest on 16,000 <i>l.</i> , 3½ per cent. stock transferred from late Board of First Fruits	-	-	-	-	-	560	-	-
From suspended benefices, received	-	-	-	-	-	1,747	7	1½
From taxation of benefices, ditto	-	-	-	-	-	323	9	9
From Subscriptions for re-building churches	-	-	484	8	3			
Subscriptions for staves, &c.	-	-	468	18	3			
Parochial estimates returned unapplied	-	-	353	10	11½	973	6	6
Arrears of vestry assessments, ditto	-	-	41	7	1			
Miscellaneous cash, ditto	-	-	10	9	7			
Compensation for malicious injury to churches	-	-	11	7	6			
Church gift for the parish of Donaghendry, returned by the representatives of the late Bishop of Derry, being money advanced by the late Board of First Fruits, but unapplied at the time of his death	-	-	-	-	-	255	13	4
			£.			181,433	18	7½
DISBURSEMENTS :								
By Churches building under engagements of the late Board of First Fruits	-	-	1,723	-	-			
Repairs of	-	-	63,829	15	3			
Extraordinary repairs of	-	-	970	17	7			
Re-building of	-	-	640	-	-	67,133	12	10
Yearly estimates, expenses for church purposes for the year ending at Easter 1837	-	-	31,158	8	7			
Bibles, Prayer, and Registry Books	-	-	473	14	9			
Expenses payable to curates under the 73 and 116 sec. of the Act	-	-	2,340	4	8			
Vestry assessments of 1833, and arrears of 1831 and 1832	-	-	-	-	-	33,972	8	-
Salaries of commissioners, secretary, treasurer, clerks, and architects, &c.	-	-	-	-	-	534	6	2
Incidents, consisting of rent, taxes, office furniture, coals, candles, house repairs, extra clerks, postage, &c.	-	-	-	-	-	7,797	5	4
Bishop of Cork, payments to, under the 33 sec. of 6 & 7 Will. 4, cap. 99	-	-	-	-	-	807	6	-
See-houses, charges on those of Ferm, Cloyne, Raphoe, and Waterford	-	-	3,451	18	9	2,250	-	-
Caretakers' wages, taxes, and other expenses on these endowments	-	-	554	18	6			
Solicitors, for personal services	-	-	1,000	-	-	4,016	11	2
for disbursements and expenses incurred	-	-	519	17	11			
Expenses of witnesses in an appeal case before the Privy Council	-	-	41	11	4			
Expenses at quarter sessions for recovery of tithes	-	-	57	5	9			
Board of Works, interest paid on account of loan	-	-	-	-	-	1,611	15	-
Advertisements	-	-	-	-	-	5,680	-	-
Clerk of the Council, fees to	-	-	-	-	-	968	18	6
Registrars - fees to	-	-	-	-	-	80	12	-
Perpetuity Purchase Fund for 44,050 <i>l.</i> Three per Cent. Consols, invested from	-	-	40,113	1	1	44	13	1
Sum returned to John O'Dell, Esq., being an overpayment in respect of his purchase	-	-	58	13	3			
Registering certificates of rents and fees, under 140 sec. of 3 & 4 Will. 4, cap. 37	-	-	116	10	-			
Balances, 1 August 1837, Perpetuity Purchase Fund	-	-	15,605	14	8½	40,268	4	4
General Fund	-	-	1,047	11	6			
						17,574	6	2½
			£.			181,433	18	7½

Jesse D'Olier, Treasurer.